

Selected Intermediate Poems

BY

R. P. Kichlu, M.A.L.T

INDIAN PRESS (Publications) LTD.
ALLAHABAD

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SELECTED INTERMEDIATE POEMS



EDITED BY

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THE INDIAN PRESS, LTD.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Messrs. Oxford University Press for '*A Passer-By*' from Robert Bridge' 'Complete Works of R. Bridges,' '*The West Wind*' from John Edward Masefield's 'Collected Poems,' Messrs. Vishwa Bharti, Shantiniketan for '*Thou Art the Ruler of all Minds*' (Jana-Gana-Mana) and '*O Man Divine Sanctify Our Efforts*' from Rabindra Nath Tagore's 'Collected Poems'; Messrs. Jonathan Cape Ltd., and Mrs. W. H. Davies for '*Sweet Stay-at-Home*' from W. H. Davies' 'The Collected Poems'; Messrs. William Heinemann Ltd., for '*The Charcoal Burner*' from Edmund Gosse's 'Poems' and '*The Flute-Player of Brindaban*' from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's 'Poems'.

Printed and Published by P. L. Yadava
at The Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad

PREFACE

In the compilation of this little volume of selected English Poems my aim has been to furnish a work that would be representative in character rather than exhaustive and at the same time have a real value for the young people entering the Intermediate stage. The restrictions of space imposed by the limits of such a selection created one difficulty and the omission of several popular pieces which suffered from the fault of repetition, another. As far as possible, however, an effort has been made to include poems by well-known poets—both lyrical and narrative—the former to provide release to the emotional yearnings of adolescence and the latter to foster interest in descriptions of ordinary things of life vivified by the poet's imagination. I hope they will be found both interesting and suitable for the students of the Intermediate classes.

Besides the lives of the poets an appreciation has been given at the beginning of each poem as far as possible, and notes and exercises at the end of the text.

I have included two poems by our national poet Gurudev Rabindra Nath Tagore—Jana Gana Mana being one of them and one poem—the Flute-Player of Brindaban—by the late Shrimati Sarojini Naidu. These poems form part of our national heritage.

My thanks are due to Kumari C. Phillips, M. A., Deputy Registrar, Departmental Examinations, U. P., for many valuable suggestions in the introduction—

Allahabad.

R. P. Kichlu

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ENGLISH POETRY

I

It is neither easy nor necessary to define what is poetry. Poets themselves and their critics have tried to offer definitions of poetry and these definitions are doubtless very suggestive, yet when we look at them critically and compare them with one another, we find that far from giving us any help in answering this question, they simply distract us because in defining poetry all of them have not the same point of view in their mind's eye nor the same outlook on life. But we know instinctively what poetry is though we may not be able to give its exact definition. 'Poetry', says Dr. Johnson, 'is metrical composition; it is the art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason and its essence is invention.' 'What is poetry,' asks Mill, 'but the thoughts and words in which emotion spontaneously embodies itself?' Carlyle regarded poetry as 'masical thought' and Shelley as 'the expression of the imagination.' Matthew Arnold thinks that 'it is a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty'. According to Edgar Allan Poe, who is now considered as the father of modern poetry, 'it is the rhythmic creation of beauty'. Ruskin defines it as 'the suggestion, by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions' and Mr. Watts-Dunton as 'the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language.'

All these and many other definitions not quoted here are very suggestive indeed, but some are too abstract and others too narrow in outlook, because they recognise only that kind of poetry which interested the writer personally, excluding all the rest. When we read poetry we move in a world of reality created for us by the poet

and these definitions fail to take account of that world of reality and take us we know not where. They express what is poetical in general but not what is specifically called poetry. An exact definition of poetry is not necessary for our purposes; at the same time we should try to mark out some fairly general and constant characteristics of poetry in order to have some guiding principles to understand its true nature.

Vision or imagination, feeling and expression are the three main constituents of the part of literature called poetry. When we deal with the poetical aspect of life we obviously refer to those facts of life, observations, experiences and incidents, in which vision and feeling or emotion play such an important part. By vision is meant the power of observing things which to an ordinary eye have no meaning at all, but which to a poet are not only full of beauty but also great spiritual significance. Poets like Wordsworth, Browning and Tennyson, to name only a few shining lights, have observed nature minutely and associated it with thoughts and incidents of life in such a manner that the result is almost a new creation, endowing the scenes and sights of nature with a beauty all its own.

But however brilliant the vision may be, unless it comes from the soul and is presented in a good form, it may not be considered poetry at all, much less great or good poetry. It was not for nothing that Coleridge cried.

“Ah from the soul itself must issue forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud

Enveloping the Earth.”

The poet has before him the visible and the invisible worlds, but unless he touches them with the fire of emotion and thought and describes them for the benefit of mankind in his own inimitable manner, the result will be disappointing indeed. When the first Sanskrit poet Valmiki saw a fowler strike a bird, the outburst of the feeling of

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 grief caused by the sight took the form of a Verse,* which to this day is associated with his name. This poet is the famous author of the epic poem—the Ramayana. He was so overpowered with the feeling of grief and pity for the bird that verse naturally and spontaneously flowed from his soul, as it were, and poetry was born. Valmiki is therefore called the first or primeval poet of Sanskrit Literature.

There can be no great poetry without emotion, no music, no singing, dancing or painting, in short, no fine art. All the fine arts are the concrete expressions of emotion and are man's creation. In poetry as a fine art, fear, anger, hate, love and other emotions play an important part, but whatever the basis, feeling without vision will be like a body without soul. When, however, both these combine in a delightful manner, through the wonderful insight of a poetic genius, then we have great poetry, provided the third essential characteristic is also present.

What is the third constituent of poetry? The above qualities are no doubt essential for all true poetry—but not alone: there must be a special vehicle for the communication to others of the vision and feelings of a great poetic soul. This will be poetry only when the poetic qualities of feeling and imagination are embodied in a certain form of expression, that is, metre or rhythmical language. This special form is necessary to embody the spirit of poetry.

There are critics, however, who have denied that for poetry any special form is necessary. They ignore the fact that poetry is a special kind of art and that systematically rhythmic language is one of its essential conditions. Liegh Hunt has well said that 'the reason why Verse is necessary to the form of poetry is that the perfection of the poetical spirit demands it—that the circle of its enthusiasm, beauty and power is incomplete without it'. True, the spirit of truest poetry has often been expressed

* मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।

यत्क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥

without the medium of verse and even in prose but that does not turn the subject-matter into actual poetry. It will be poetry only when it is treated in metre. Matthew Arnold has also pointed out the essential difference between 'imaginative production in verse and imaginative production in prose.' "The rhythm and measure of poetry", he maintains "elevated to a regularity, rhythm and force, very different from that of the rhythm and measure which can pervade prose, are a part of its perfection." In cases where a distinction between prose and poetry is not possible, no hard and fast rule can be laid down, but as a general rule we can safely recognise that metre is the most general characteristic of poetry, considered as a special kind of literary art and the term poetry can usually be employed only to connote such a composition.

That there is close relationship between rhythmic form and poetical feeling as evidenced from the instance of Valmiki's outburst of the feeling of grief in verse referred to above—cannot be denied, but apart from this it will be conceded that the metrical form affords much aesthetic pleasure to the reader and that it is a part of its perfection. It appeals to the senses much more readily than prose, however perfect, because the poetic spirit spontaneously seeks to express itself in that form and so appeals to the heart much more quickly. Goswami Tulsidas's deep feeling for Rama as the incarnation of God could only be adequately expressed through the medium of verse and the measure of his love is also measure of his success as a poet because the deeper the feeling, the more characteristic and decided the rhythm as Mill has well maintained. Had Tulsidas written his Ramayana in prose, the student can judge for himself whether it would have pleased and almost galvanised his hearers as it does today.

From this it is clear that the relation between poetic substance and metrical form is not only incidental but real and psychological and essential for all true poetry. Metrical form has a music of its own which has a subtle magical power over the emotions. It stirs the very soul as nothing does. Turn the finest passages of Shakespeare,

Milton and Tennyson into prose and you will realise the truth of this assertion much more distinctly. Form is therefore an essential characteristic of poetry.

II

There are two principal divisions of poetry: (1) Subjective poetry which deals with personal thoughts, experiences and feeling of the poet, (2) Impersonal or objective poetry which deals with created incidents or stories. The distinction though true enough is not, however, applicable to modern poetry in which both the personal and impersonal elements continually combine.

Subjective poetry is often called, though loosely lyrical poetry, because it was originally composed to be sung to the accompaniment of the lyre, a musical instrument. The ballads and epic poems which used to be so sung might also be regarded as lyrical, but, strictly speaking, they are not personal in the sense in which we have used the term here. This kind of poetry is very common and full of variety and deals with all sorts of individual and personal experiences and emotions as well as human interests as a whole. The lyrics of love, of patriotism and religious emotion are very common varieties. For a lyric to be good we have to take into consideration what sort of emotion has inspired it, whether its imagery is vivid and beautiful, and above all whether it is characterised by sincerity and beauty which is the sheet-anchor of all fine art. Though essentially individual or personal in character, the world's best lyrics are those which may be termed 'universal', that is, which may embody what is typically human rather than individual or personal.

Further important divisions of this kind of poetry are the Ode, the Elegy, and the Sonnet.

The 'Ode' may be defined as 'any strain of enthusiastic or exalted lyrical verse directed to a fixed purpose and dealing progressively with a dignified theme'. Among the Greeks, the term 'ode' was used for any kind of lyrical composition—drinking and love songs as well as the lofty occasional poems of Pindar. Such classical forms, however,

are not very common in English. From the definition given above it will be noticed that the term is both ambiguous and elastic and there are no differentiating features to distinguish it from other kind of lyrics. There has been therefore some diversity of views as to which lyric may be called an Ode and which not. But there is no doubt that the theme of the Ode should be exalted or dignified and that it should also be characterised by a certain amount of elaboration in thought and treatment. It may be regular like Shelley's 'West Wind' and Keats' 'Ode to the Nightingale' or irregular like Wordsworth's 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality' or Tennyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.'

The Elegy is a brief lyric of mourning or sorrow on personal bereavement. Its basis is therefore absolute sincerity of emotion and expression. In the evolution of literature it has undergone some changes, e.g., it has taken the form of a memorial poem to some great man containing reminiscences and thoughts on his life and character. Sometimes, too, personal interest in the subject yields place to the problems of philosophy and the poet's meditative mood begins to unravel the mysteries of life and destiny. Milton's 'Lycidas', Shelley's 'Adonais', and Matthew Arnold's 'Rugby Chapel' and 'Thyrsis' are the best examples of this type. In Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', one of the best elegies, both these elements are very beautifully combined. This poem is at once a tribute to a dead friend and a philosophical poem of deep meaning. Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' which is deservedly famous as an English poem, is another outstanding example.

The Sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines composed under certain prescribed rules of its own. Originally it came from Italy where Petrarch made it popular. It came to the English soil during the age of Queen Elizabeth. The special rules governing the composition of the sonnet have more often than not been ignored by English writers and so two types have grown up: one the Italian type and the other the Shakespearean type. The emotion

of love was the one theme which expressed itself through the Sonnet, but Milton changed the theme and 'gave the notes to glory' and Wordsworth too did not like the limitations imposed upon it.

III

Objective poetry includes the following kinds:

- (1) The Ballad, (2) Narrative poetry, including the Epic, Metrical Romances and Dramatic poetry.

It is not possible in a short introduction to study all these forms of literature in detail, but we propose to touch briefly upon each branch so that the student may have some idea as to what each signifies. In objective poetry the poet deals with the outer world of passion and action and handles his subject without intruding himself upon them in a direct manner, whereas in subjective poetry he gives vent to his feelings in regard to a particular subject immediately and expresses the meaning of the outer world in terms of his own thoughts and emotions. In an epic poem or dramatic piece he creates characters who speak their minds in particular situations and there is no occasion for the poet to reveal his feelings or views directly anywhere. He creates a world which goes on, as he wishes it no doubt, but at the same time under the stress of its own being. It is true that no poet can produce his work of art by entirely detaching himself from it or without revealing the impact of his own personality on the views and feelings expressed by his created characters. But as a rule, he does so indirectly, not directly.

The English ballad is a short story in verse and represents a very early stage in the evolution of the poetic art. Popular ballads used to be sung by wandering minstrels and so they contained simple yet energetic descriptions of deeds of valour and love along with an admixture of supernaturalism. 'The Eve of St. John' by Scott and the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' by Coleridge are examples of the modern ballad in its developed form, but its expansion is natural and not the artificial reproduction of the primitive type.

Narrative poetry includes the Epic proper, metrical romances and dramatic poetry with all its sub-divisions. The Epic is a longer narrative in verse like the great Sanskrit Epic 'Mahabharata' in the composition of which legends, folk poems and current stories have all contributed a share and it is not certain whether the author is one or many. This is called the Epic of Growth.

The Epic of Art is the result of individual genius, scholarship and culture. Here too the same mythological heroes and supernatural beings are in evidence but the style is bookish, not spontaneous or simple as that of the Epic of Growth. Milton's 'Paradise Lost' is the best example of this type.

The only class of narrative poetry which need be mentioned here is that which represents the tendency towards realism in poetic art. Its subjects are related to our daily experiences, manners, customs and economic life, yet in treatment it is superbly poetic and often very humorous and delightful. Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village' with its excellent character studies is a very good example of this class of poetry and it is represented in this selection.

I think enough has been said to enable the young reader to understand the main currents of English poetry and the Metrical romance and Dramatic poetry need not be treated in detail in such a short introduction.

Allahabad

R. P. Kichlu

August 20, 1948

TIME AND LOVE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564—1616)

[Shakespeare who knew 'small Latin and less Greek' had to leave Stratford-on-Avon, his native village, because he was involved in deer-poaching escapades in the park of Sir Thomas Lucy. In the city of London he first became an actor and then a playwright. He wrote in all thirty-seven plays—comedies, historical plays, tragedies and dramatic romances. His greatness for all times has been ensured because of the world-renowned four tragedies written by him—King Lear, Hamlet, Othello and Macbeth. In 1611, he came back to his village home and lived a happy and prosperous life till his death in 1616.

Shakespeare also wrote one hundred and fifty-four sonnets—all on the topic of love as was the prevailing fashion of the time. There is a good deal of controversy about the autobiographical element in the sonnets. It is suggested that 'the dark lady' of the sonnets is the Maid of Honour of Queen Elizabeth—Mary Eliton—who was loved by Shakespeare, but who did not care to respond. The sonnets differ greatly in poetic value, some being superb poetry and others mere literary exercises.

"They may not be altogether autobiographical but they express the poet's conception of love and friendship. They are the only direct expression of the poet's own feelings."]

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea

But sad mortality o'ersways their power,

How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea

Whose action is no stronger than a flower ?

O how shall summer's honey breath hold out
 Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
 When rocks impregnable are not so stout
 Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?

O fearful meditation ! where, alack ?
 Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid
 Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back
 Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid ?

O ! none, unless this miracle have might,
 That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

—*W. Shakespeare*

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

JOHN MILTON (1608—1674)

[Milton 'the god-gifted organ voice of England' made himself immortal by writing *Paradise Lost*—the best epic poem in the English language. He was a puritan in religious belief and a Republican in his political views, with the result that he could not escape the consequences of his conviction. As a result of his studious habits and hard work till late at night his eye-sight suffered so much that in 1652 he became blind—a fact which he laments so much in his well-known sonnet. His main works are: *L' Allegro*, *II Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, *Comus*, *Areopagitica*, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*.

Milton's sonnets are personal or controversial or political in nature. He enriched this form of writing by enlarging the scope of it. In the words of Landour:—

'He caught the sonnet from the dainty hand
Of love, who cried to lose it, and he gave
The notes to glory'.

The present sonnet is personal. With the restoration of Charles II, the blind poet-politician had to go into hiding and his fear was that the army of the royalists might do harm to him and destroy his house. This fear inspired him to rise to his full poetic stature and write a sonnet which is dignified by sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel.]

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors
May seize,

If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.

He can requite thee! for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.

Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground: and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

—*J. Milton*

THE HUMAN SEASONS

JOHN KEATS (1795—1821)

[John Keats was born in 1795 at Moorfields, London. He was sent to a private school at Enfield. He read voraciously and nothing escaped his attention—History, Fiction, Politics, Virgil and whatever came in his way. He was greatly interested in Roman and Greek mythologies. In 1810 his mother died; his father had passed away in 1804. On leaving school, he was apprenticed for five years to a Surgeon, and he became a dresser at Guy's Hospital. In 1817, he gave up this profession and went in for a literary career. He published his first volume of 'poems' followed by 'Endymion'. His brother George went away to America, and he contracted tuberculosis which he might have inherited from his mother. The savagery of merciless critics, financial embarrassments and the fatal disease hastened his end in 1821.

His most important poems are : Hyperion, Lamia, St. Agnes, Eve, Ode to a Nightingale, Ode to a Grecian Urn, and Ode to Autumn.

He is one of the outstanding poets of the Romantic Revival. The guiding principle of Keats' life and poetry is the worship of beauty.

'Beauty is truth, Truth beauty, that is all
ye know on earth and all ye need to know.]

Four Seasons fill the measure of the year,
There are four seasons in the mind of man;
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span;
He has his Summer, when luxuriously

Spring's honeyed cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminare, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
His scul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close! contented so to look
On mists in idleness—so let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook,
He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forgo his mortal nature.

—J. Keats

CHILLON

GEORGE GORDON BYRON (1788—1824)

[Byron was educated at Harrow where he distinguished himself by his love of manly sports and his undaunted spirit. He is a revolutionary poet of the age of Romantic Revival. He championed the cause of the suppressed nations of the world and became an advocate of liberty and freedom everywhere. His unfortunate quarrel with his wife led to Byron leaving England with a resolution never to return. He visited France, Switzerland and the north of Italy, and lived for some time at Venice and subsequently at Rome. Byron, as a poet, is not so much admired in England as on the Continent, where he has the reputation of being second only to Shakespeare among English poets. His main works are: *The Siege of Corinth*, *Child Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *Manfred* and *Don Juan*.]

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind !

Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art,

For there thy habitation is the heart—

The heart which love of thee alone can bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,

Their country conquers with their martyrdom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for't was trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

—Lord Byron

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770—1850)

[Wordsworth has been called 'the high-priest of Nature'. He is one of the pioneers of the age of Romantic Revival which was ushered in by the publication of the Lyrical Ballads by Wordsworth and Coleridge. Wordsworth in his preface to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads stated his theory of poetic diction asserting that 'there is no essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition.' After the death of Southey in 1743, Wordsworth was appointed the Poet Laureate.

His main works are: The Excursion, The Recluse, The Skylark, The Daffodils, Ode to Duty, Ode on the Intimations of Immortality and Tintern Abbey.]

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes,

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd
Their thoughts I cannot measure—
But the least motion which they made
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.
The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can
That there was pleasure there.
If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

—W. Wordsworth

TO THE CUCKOO

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice,
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering voice?
While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near.

*

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Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.
Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,

A voice, a mystery;
The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.
And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, fairy place;
That is fit home for Thee!

—William Wordsworth

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

ALFRED TENNYSON (1809—1892)

[Tennyson succeeded Wordsworth as Poet Laureate in 1850 and was created a baron in 1884. He has been called 'the representative poet of his age'. His keen sense of perception coupled with his happy choice of words made him an artist even before he was a poet. His well-known poem, 'In Memoriam' expresses his sorrow for the death of his greatest friend, Arthur Henry Hallam and his own broodings over death and the problems of Modern Science. His other important works are: The Princess, Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, Idylls of the King and Queen Mary.

Tennyson's poetry is at once simple and lofty, charming and revealing, and so perfect in form that it has become an integral part of the literature of the world.

This poem (an extract from the Princess) was written as Tennyson himself tells us, "in the yellow autumn-tide at Tintern Abbey, full for me of its bygone memories". A peculiar feature of this poem is that it is written in blank verse, yet it is one of the most beautiful and musical lyrics.]

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.
Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the nether world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one

That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.
Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.
Dear as remember'd kisses after death
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more

—Lord Tennyson

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801—1890)

[Cardinal Newman is one of the originators of the Oxford Movement. He wrote a number of articles for tracts for the Times Newspaper of London. He was ordained a priest of the Church of Rome and was later on appointed as the rector of the Roman Catholic University of Dublin and principal of the Roman Catholic School at Edgbaston. He was made a cardinal in 1879. In his works, he has mainly supported the doctrines of the Church of Rome. He is one of the greatest masters of English Prose Style. He wrote two poems—The Dream of Gerontius and Lead, Kindly Light—which are known wherever the English language is spoken.

The present extract constitutes one of the most moving poems in English literature. Mahatma Gandhi was very fond of it.]

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;

The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.

Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;

I loved to choose and see my path, but now
Lead Thou me on.

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I loved the garish day, and spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will; remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on

O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,

And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

—J. H. Newman

ALL FOR THE CAUSE !

WILLIAM MORRIS (1834—1896)

[Morris was an artist and as such he revolted against the ugliness and wretchedness of life. He undertook the difficult work of reforming the world. He advocated the gospel of socialism as the political panacea for all the evils from which the world was suffering. In his poetry we find the dominant note of liberty and equality.

As a poet, his place is not very high. He essentially believed in the principle of 'sheer craftsmanship' as a means of expression of an innate sense of beauty. His poems are noted for their simplicity and sincerity, clarity of ideas and melody of verse.

This poem embodies the ideas of Morris who was opposed to capitalistic society. "Fervent in feeling, direct in its appeal, simple in rhythm, the poem has a peculiar charm of its own."]

Hear a word, a word in season, for the day is
drawing nigh,
When the Cause shall call upon us, some to
live, and some to die !
He that dies shall not die lonely, many an one
hath gone before,
He that lives shall bear no burden heavier than
the life they bore.
Nothing ancient is their story, e'en but yester-
day they bled,
Youngest they of earth's beloved, last of all
the valiant dead.

E'en the tidings we are telling was the tale
they had to tell,

E'en the hope that our hearts cherish, was the
hope for which they fell.

In the grave where tyrants thrust them, lies
their labour and their pain,

But undying from their sorrow springeth up
the hope again,

Mourn not therefore, nor lament it that the
world outlives their life;

Voice and vision yet they give us, making
strong our hands or strife.

Some had name and fame and honour, learn'd
they were, and wise and strong,

Some were nameless, poor, unlettered, weak
in all but grief and wrong.

Named and nameless all live in us; one and all
they lead us yet.

Every pain to count for nothing, every sorrow
to forget.

Hearken how they cry, 'Oh, happy, happy ye
that ye were born

In the sad slow night's departing in the rising
of the morn;

'Fair the crown the cause hath for you, well
to die or well to live,
Through the battle, through the tangle, peace
to gain or peace to give,
Ah, it may be ! oft unseemeth, in the days
that yet shall be,
When no slave of gold abideth 'twixt, the
breadth of sea to sea,

Oft, when men and maids are merry ere the
sunlight leaves the earth,
And they bless the day beloved, all too short
for all their mirth,

Some shall pause awhile and ponder, on the
bitter days of old,
Ere the toil of strife and battle, overthrew the
curse of gold;

Then 'twixt lips of loved and lover solemn
thoughts of us shall rise;
We who once were fools and dreamers, then
shall be the brave and wise;
There amidst the world new-built shall our
earthly deeds abide,
Though our names be all forgotten, and the
tale of how we died.

Life or death then, who shall heed it, what
we gain or what we lose ?
Fair flies life amid the struggle, and the Cause
for each shall choose.

Hear a word, a word in season, for the day is
drawing nigh,
When the Cause shall call upon us, some to
live, and some to die !

—*William Morris*

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

X

WALT WHITMAN (1819—1892)

[Walt Whitman was born in 1819 at West Hills, Long Island. He attended the Public Schools in Brooklyn. Later on he worked in a lawyer's office, then in a doctor's and lastly in a printer's. He turned out to be a voracious reader and showed fondness for imaginative types of literature. He also taught in a school for some time and later on became the editor of two newspapers. He had a stroke of paralysis in 1874. He died in 1892 at Camden.

His main works are :—

Leaves of Grass, Specimen Days, Democratic Vistsa and November Boughs.

"In poetry Whitman revolted against the tradition, both in matter and in manner. He was the conscientious prophet of naturalness and his hand was against all conventions. His poems shocked the academic traditions of American literature by their unconventionality, by their suggestiveness, by their rude, strong, nonchalant utterances, by the frankness and outspokenness of their treatment of the problems of sex, and by the poet's broad, massive, rolling processional style."

The theme of this poem is that President Lincoln abolished slavery and the Civil War (1861—65) between the northern and southern States of America had come to an end. It was in this hour of triumph and at the height of his glory that Lincoln met his death at the hands of an assassin. As we know, Mahatma Gandhi met a similar fate just after he had achieved freedom for his country.]

O Captain ! my Captain, our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack,
 the Prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear,
 the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel,
 the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart ! heart ! heart !
 O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain ! my Captain !
 rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung
 for you the bugle trills !
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—
 for you the shores acrowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass,
 their eager faces turning ;
Here Captain ! dear father !
 This arm beneath your head !
It is some dream that on the deck
 you've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer,
 his lips are pale and still,

My father does not feel my arm,
 he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchored safe and sound,
 its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship
 comes in with object won;
Exult O shores and ring O bells !
 But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

—*Walt Whitman*

A PASSER-BY

ROBERT BRIDGES (1844—1930)

[Robert Bridges was educated at the Public School, at Eton and later on he graduated from Oxford, in 1867. He studied medicine at Bartholomew's Hospital (London) gave up the medical profession in 1882 and devoted himself exclusively to literature. He wrote critical essays, poems and plays. He was appointed Poet-Laureate in 1913 in succession of Alfred Austin. He died in 1930.

Of his works, the following may be mentioned :—

The Growth of Love (1889), Milton's Prosody (1893), Shorter Poems (1894), A Study of John Keats (1895), The Spirit of Man (1916).

"Robert Bridges is a poet of the classical tradition. He has the classical temper and restraint as well. In the spirit of his poems, he was quite different from the age in which he flourished. In the felicity of diction and subtle sense of rhythm he was nearer to the 19th century poets. He is reflective, pensive and cool to a degree that makes some of his poems lack the 'haunting sweetness' of lyrical poems. Compton-Rickett says "the delicate flutings of Bridges carry with them admittedly a magic of their own."]

Whither, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding

Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest not sea rising, nor sky clouding,

Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah ! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,

When skies are cold misty, and hail is hurling,

Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer heaven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before, thee, in the country that well thou
knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air;
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goes,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails awnings spread, thy masts bare;
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-
capped, grandest
Peak, that is over the feathery palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou
standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blame-
less,

Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails
crowding.

—R. Bridges



THE CHARCOAL BURNER

SIR EDMUND GOSSE (1849—1928)

[Edmund Gosse was the son of Philip Henry Gosse. He worked as a translator to the Board of Trade from 1875 to 1904. He then was appointed Librarian to the House of Lords and held this office for a decade. His well-known works are: History of Eighteenth Century Literature, History of Modern English Literature, Collected Essays, The Life of Swinburne and Books on the table.]

In this poem, the ideal of 'plain living and high thinking' is presented to us.]

He lives within the hollow wood,
From one clear dell he seldom ranges;
His daily toil in solitude
Revolves, but never changes.

A still old man, with grizzled beard, ^{अधपकी बिन्दड़ी}
Grey eye, bent shape and smoke-tann'd
features,

His quiet footstep is not fear'd
By shyest woodland creatures.

I love to watch the pale blue spire
His scented labour builds above it;
I track the woodland by his fire
And, seen afar, I love it.

It seems among the serious trees
 The emblem of a living pleasure,
 It animates the silences
 As with a tuneful measure.

And dream not that such ^{dull} humdrum ways
 Fold naught of nature's charm around him ;
 The mystery of soundless days
 Hath sought for him and found him.

He hides within his simple brain
 An instinct innocent and holy, ^{पवित्र}
 The music of a wood-bird's strain,—
 Nor blithe; nor melancholy,

But hung ^{उत्थ} upon the calm content
 Of wholesome leaf and bough and blossom—
 An unecstatic ravishment ^{उत्थ}
 Born in a rustic bosom.

He knows the mood of forest things,
 He feels, in his own speechless fashion,
 For helpless forms of fur and wings
 A mild paternal passion.

Within his horny hand he holds
 The warm brood of the ruddy squirrel ;
 Their bushy mother storms and scolds,
 But knows no sense of peril.

The dormouse shares his crumb of cheese,
His homeward trudge the rabbits follow; रबरगोत्र
He finds, in angels of the trees,
The cup-nest of the swallow.

And through this sympathy, perchance,
The beating heart of life he reaches
Far more than we who idly dance
An hour beneath the beeches.

Our science and our empty pride.
Our busy dream of introspection,
To God seem vain and poor beside
This dumb sincere reflection.

Yet he will die unsought, unknown,
A nameless head-stone stand above him,
And the vast woodland, vague and lone,
Be all that's left to love him.

—E. Gosse

SWEET STAY-AT-HOME

W. H. DAVIES (1870—)

[William Henry Davies was born in 1870 at Newport, Monmouthshire. In his youth he was restless and lawless. He lost a foot while 'Jumping' from a railway train in Canada. Then he returned to England and started on his poetical career. His blankverse tragedy, 'The Robber' was rejected. Then he took to the writing of sonnets, narrative poems and humorous essays. In due course of time, he attracted the attention of London papers. At long last he rose to eminence, and is now a notable figure in Twentieth Century Poetry.

His main works are :—

Nature Poems, Farewell to Poesy, Song of Joy, A Great Time, The Moon and Foliage.

Davies is primarily a poet of nature. 'Nearly all his poems are fresh springing from a mind which sees the world for itself and not as others see it. For clearness of vision, for freshness of imagination, for the surprising dilacacy of his objective descriptions, he holds the highest rank among the present-day poets'.]

Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-Content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent;
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep;
Thou hast not sailed in Indian Seas,
Where scent comes forth in every breeze.

Thou hast not seen the rich grape grow
For miles, as far as eyes can go.

Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light;

Nor the North Sea in spring sent out
Bright hues that like birds flit about

In solid cages of white ice—

Sweet stay-at-home, sweet Love-one-place.

Thou hast not seen black fingers pick

White cotton when the bloom is thick
Nor heard black throats in harmony;

Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise

To hide proud kings from common eyes,
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom

Where green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like fairer flowers—

Sweet Stay-at-home, all these long hours.
Sweet well-content, sweet Love-one-place,

Sweet, simple maid, bless thy dear face;
For thou hast made more homely stuff

Nurture thy gentle self enough.

I love thee for a heart that's kind—

Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

—W. H. Davies

THE WEST WIND

JOHN EDWARD MASEFIELD (1874—)

[Masefield lost his parents quite early and was brought up by his aunt. He was sent to King's School and when he was hardly fourteen he became indentured to a merchantship. The study of books did not delight him so much as a life of adventure. During the next three years he visited several parts of the world. After a voyage to Chile, he was promoted to an officer's rank in the ship. When he came back to England in 1897, he joined the staff of the Manchester Guardian. 'Salt Water Ballads' containing 'Sea Fever' were published in 1902. He married in 1903. In 1907, appeared the 'Everlasting Mercy' which brought him into prominence. On the death of Robert Bridges in 1930, he was appointed the Poet Laureate. In 1935, the Order of Merit was conferred upon him. He has a private theatre at his home at Board's Hill, near Oxford.

His other notable works are Ballads and Poems (1910) 'The Daffodil Fields.' Among his plays 'The Tragedy of Nan' (1909). 'The Tragedy of Pompey the Great' (1910) deserve mention.

He has known of life in the vulgar and poor conditions, and has made use of this knowledge in giving a touch of realism to his poems. His narrative poems combine a rough vigour of diction with religious fervour and an insufficiently austere conception of the nature of poetry. He has a keen imaginative faculty, a power of vivid description and a sensitive appreciation of the beauties of Nature.]

It's warm wind, the west wind, full of bird's cries
never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes.

For it comes from the west lands, the old brown
Hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.
It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as
mine,
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like
wine.
There is cool green there, where men may lie at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the
nest.

'Will ye not come home, brother? ye have been
long away,
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the
May;
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the
rain,
Will ye not come home, brother, home to us
again?
The young corn is green, brother, where the
rabbits run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds and warm rain and
sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's
brain'
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring
again.

'Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the
green wheat,
So will ye not come home, brother, and rest your
tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for
aching eyes.'
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds'
cries.

It's the white road, westwards is the road I must
tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for heart
and head,
To the violets and the warm hearts and the
thrushes' song
In the fine land, the west land, the land where I
belong.

—*John Masefield*

THE FLUTE-PLAYER OF BRINDABAN

MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU (1879—1949)

[Mrs. Naidu occupies a unique place as a poet-politician of Modern India. She by virtue of her being a poetess of no mean order, has justly been called 'The Nightingale of India'. Under the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, she took active part in the various political movements intended to throw off the foreign yoke. She rose to the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in 1925—the highest honour that the country can bestow on any one. She on occasions more than once courted imprisonment and served several terms of imprisonment in His Majesty's Jail. When the Englishmen decided to quit India in August, 1947 she was called upon to serve the people as the first Governor of U. P. in free India—a position which she has ever since held with distinction. After a short illness she passed away at Lucknow on March 2, 1949.

Among her main literary works mention may be made of 'The Golden Threshold', 'The Bird of Time' and 'The Broken Wing'.]

Why didst thou play thy matchless flute
Neath the Kadamba tree,
And wound my idly dreaming heart
With poignant melody,
So where thou goest I must go,
My flute-player, with thee?
Still must I like a homeless bird
Wander, forsaking all;

The earthly loves and worldly lures
That held my life in thrall,
And follow, follow, answering
Thy magical flute-call.

To Indra's golden-flowering groves
Where streams immortal flow,
Or to sad Yama's silent Courts
Engulfed in lampless woe,
Where'er thy subtle flute I hear
Beloved I must go !

No peril of the deep or height
Shall daunt my winged foot;
No fear of time-unconquered space,
Or light-untravelled route,
Impede my heart that pants to drain
The nectar of thy flute.

—*Sarojini Naidu*

RUBAIYAT OF UMAR KHAYYAM OF NAISHAPUR

EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809—1883)

[Fitzgerald never pretended to be learned, but he showed a genuine interest in reading books in different languages. Though a sort of recluse, he enjoyed the closest intimacy with Tennyson, Crabbe and Spedding.

It is mostly because of his translations that he is remembered to-day. He translated dramas of Calderon, a Spanish writer, and some plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles of Greece. But his best-known translation is that of the Rubaiyat of Umar Khayyam. Fitzgerald has been exceptionally successful in his free translation of Umar Khayyam.

Umar Khayyam, the astronomer-poet of Persia, was born at Naishapur, about the time of the death of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. Though in foreign countries Umar is remembered as a poet, yet in his own country he was respected as an astronomer and mathematician. However, in his poems there is a peculiar mixture of subtle philosophical maxims and passionate rhapsodies on epicurean pleasures. 'He was the poet of Agnosticism and Epicureanism, having failed (however mistakenly) in finding any providence but Destiny, and any world but this, he set about making the most of it.]

I

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—'open then the Door!
'You know how little while we have to 'stay,
'And, once departed, may return no more.'

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

'How sweet is mortal sovranty!' think some;
Others—'How blest the Paradise to come!'
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a distant Drum!

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep;
And Bahram, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

Ah, my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears—
To-morrow? Why To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

7

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend ;

Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, Sans Song, Sans Singer, and—Sans end.

8

Oh, come with old Khayyam, and leave the wise
To talk ; one thing is certain, that Life flies ;

One thing is certain, and the Rest is lies ;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

9

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow.
And with my own hand laboured it to grow ;

And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
'I came like water, and like wind I go'.

10

Ah, fill the Cup:—what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet

Unborn To-morrow and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet !

11

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays ;

Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

12

The Moving Finger writes ; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

—*Edward Fitzgerald*

'JANA-GANA-MANA'

RABINDRANATH TAGORE (1861—1941)

[Rabindranath Tagore, poet, patriot, humanist, educationist and artist, was born in Calcutta on 6th May, 1861. He was the youngest son of Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, a scholarly and deeply religious man. The young Tagore was educated privately. From his early childhood he was so sensitive to beauty and music that he began to write verses at the age of eight. When he was seventeen he accompanied his second brother to England with the idea of studying law. In 1901, Tagore founded the famous University 'Shantiniketan' at Bolpur. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. He was knighted in 1915 but he resigned the knighthood in 1919 as a protest against Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre. Although a staunch nationalist he believed in internationalism and held the view that the East and West instead of being irreconcilable should be complementary. His grateful countrymen lovingly called him 'Gurudeva'. His main works are:—

Gitanjali (1913)

The Crescent Moon (1917)

Lectures on Personality (1925)

The Religion of Man (1931)

Tagore wrote songs and lyrics which have now become world famous on account of their love of nature, fresh air and intense patriotism.

The English version of the famous 'JANA-GANA-MANA' song was first given by the poet in Madanapalle in Chittoor district, South India in 1919 when the poet renounced his knighthood as a protest against Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy. The Adhinayak in this poem is God.]

(1)

Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny.
Thy name rouses the hearts
of the Punjab, Sind, Gujrat and Maratha,
of Dravid, Orissa and Bengal.
It echoes in the hills of the Vindhya and
Himalayas,
mingles in the music of Jumna and Ganges,
and is chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.
They pray for thy blessing and sing thy
praise.
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

(2)

Day and night, the voice goes out from
land to land,
calling Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains
round thy throne
and Parsees, Mussalmans and Christians.
Offerings are brought to the shrine by
the East and the West
to be woven in a garland of love.
Thou bringest the hearts of all peoples
into the harmony of one life,

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

(3)

Eternal Charioteer, thou drivest man's
history
along the road rugged with rises and falls
of Nations.

Amidst all tribulations and terror
thy trumpet sounds to hearten those that
despair and droop,
and guide all people in their paths of
peril and pilgrimage.

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

(4)

When the long dreary night was dense
with gloom

and the country lay still in a stupor,
thy Mother's arms held her,
thy wakeful eyes bent upon her face,
till she was rescued from the dark evil
dreams

that oppressed her spirit,
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

(5)

The night dawns, the sun rises in the East,
the birds sing, the morning breeze brings
a stir of new life.

Touched by golden rays of thy love
India wakes up and bends her head at thy
feet.

Thou King of all Kings,
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

—*Rabindra Nath Tagore*

O MAN DIVINE, SANCTIFY OUR EFFORTS

(1)

O man divine, sanctify our efforts
with the light of thy sacred touch.
Dwell in our hearts
hold before us the image of thy greatness.
Forgive our transgression,
teach us to forgive.

(2)

Guide us into serene fortitude
through all joys and sorrows,
inspire us with love
overcoming pride of self,
and let our devotion for thee
banish all enmity.

—*Rabindra Nath Tagore*

NOTES AND EXERCISES

TIME AND LOVE

Brass—A metal which is known for its durability.

Stone—A substance which wears slowly and lasts for a long time.

But—It is used as a relative pronoun, and has a negative sense 'which not'.

Oversways—Overpowers.

With this rage—Fury of destruction.

Hold a plea—Defend itself against destruction.

Flower—The epitome of delicacy and softness.

Honey breath—Sweet breeze.

Wreckful siege—The destructive operation.

Battering days—Constant firing by Time.

[The metaphor is aptly borrowed from army operations. Time is represented here as a powerful army attacking the fortress of youth.]

Impregnable—Unconquerable.

Fearful meditation—Frightful reflection.

Time's best jewel—The most precious thing in the world—beauty.

Time's chest—Time is represented here as having a big box in which he gathers up the beauty he snatches away.

"Time hath, my lord, a mallet at his back.

In which he puts alms for oblivion."

Troilus and Cressida.

उन्मूलन—*unmoolan*—movement.

Spoil—Plunder, Booty.

Miracle—Wonderful happening.

In black ink—The verses written by the poet.

EXERCISES

1. What is a sonnet? Describe a Shakespearean sonnet.
2. Write the substance of this sonnet.
3. Give a short appreciation of this sonnet.
4. Explain the third stanza of this sonnet.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight-in-arms—A Colonel is a military officer holding rank higher than a captain. Knight-in-arms is a title conferred upon a person for distinguished heroism.

Defenceless doors—Unprotected house (Synecdoche).

Deed of honour—Heroic performances.

Requit—Repay.

Charms—Magic spells. The secret of the art of poetry.

Clime—It is a contraction of 'climate', used in the sense of country.

Bright circle—Flaming orb, *i.e.*, the sun. [The poet will sing of the generous act of the military officer and thus glorify his name for all times to come.]

The Muse's bower—The house of a poet. In Greek mythology there are nine sister-goddesses, the presiding deities over the various branches of poetry and fine arts. Bower is usually the private room of a lady or a cosy sheltered nook in a garden.

Emathian Conquerer—Alexander, the Great, king of Macedonia (356-323 B. C.).

Bid spare—Ordered to be spared. The reference is to the incident when on the accession of Alexander, the Thebans revolted and Alexander punished them by destroying the entire city. But Alexander, as a patron of Art and Learning, had ordered that the house which was the residence of the great poet, Pindar, should be spared from the general devastation.

Temple and tower—Places of worship as well as dwellings of man.

Repeated—Recited over and over again.

Air—Chorus, Song.

Sad Electra's poet—The word 'sad' qualifies 'Electra' which is a tragic play written by Euripides, a famous Greek poet. If the word 'sad' refers to the poet, Euripides, then it means 'serious' or 'grave'.

The Athenian walls—The city of Athens.

Ruin bare—Complete destruction [The Spartan General, Lysander, conquered Athens and wanted to convert the city into a desert. At a feast of the officers, certain lines from the Chorus of Electra of Euripides were sung and Lysander was so greatly moved that he declared it an unworthy act to reduce a place, so celebrated for the production of illustrious men, to total ruin and destruction.]

EXERCISES

1. Prove from this sonnet that Milton had a high conception of a poet's task.
2. Give the substance of this sonnet.
3. Describe a Miltonic sonnet.
4. Explain the last six lines.
5. Scan lines 5 to 8.

THE HUMAN SEASONS

Measure—Full course.

Lusty—Vigorous and passionate.

Cud—Food that ruminating animal brings back from stomach into mouth and chews at leisure.

Ruminate—Chew the cud. Ponder.

Coves—Sheltered recess.

Pale—Bloodless.

Misfeature—Ugliness due to old age.

EXERCISES

1. What does the poet mean by saying 'there are four seasons in the mind of man'?
2. Give the substance of the poem.
3. What is the form of this poem? Define and explain.
4. Name and define two different figures of speech used in this poem.

CHILLON

Eternal spirit—Never dying sentiment.

Chainless—Unsubdued.

Brightest in dungeon—It shines the brightest in the gloom of the prison.

Habitation—Abode.

Thy sons—Champions of liberty, like Bonnivard. (Bonnivard was imprisoned by the Duke of Savoy in the dungeon of the Castle of Chillon, on the lake of Geneva, for his courageous stand against the tyranny of Piedmont during the first half of the 17th century.)

Dayless gloom—Darkness undisputed by the light of day.

Finds wings—Is broadcasted all round.

Cold pavement—Floor made of stone.

Sod—Tuft of grass.

EXERCISES

1. What do you know of the sufferings of Bonnivard?
2. What is the poet's message in these lines?
3. What is a sonnet? Which kind of sonnet is this?
4. Explain the last six lines of the poem.

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

A thousand blended notes—"Thousand" is used in the sense of innumerable. The sweet melody produced by innumerable birds singing together.

A grove—The holy grove in Alfoxden dell—a favourite place of Wordsworth, Coleridge and others.

Reclined—Inclined.

Sweet mood—Delightful state of mind.

Pleasant thoughts—Referring to the beauty and cheerfulness of nature all around.

Link—Connect.

That through me ran—That made me feel life in every limb.

It grieved my heart—It filled my heart with sadness.

Hopped—Jumped.

Measure—Estimate.

Spread out to catch—As if the twigs were sentient and could feel pleasure.

The breezy air—The air blowing softly.

This belief—That every thing in the universe is so happy and cheerful.

EXERCISES

1. What was the occasion for the composition of this poem?
2. Give a summary of this poem.
3. What can you say of Wordsworth's 'poetical creed' from this poem?
4. Explain the second and the last stanzas of the poem.

TO THE CUCKOO

Blithe—Happy, gay.

New-comer—The bird comes to England in spring and flies off to warmer climes at the advent of winter.

Wandering voice—Migratory bird.

Twofold shout—The double note of two distinct syllables (KU-KU)

“The cuckoo now on every tree,
Sings cuckoo cuckoo.”

Shakespeare

Babbling—Singing unintelligibly.

Of sunshine and of flowers—The spring—the season of cloudless sky and blooming flowers.

Visionary hours—‘Past time summoned up by memory and imagination’—Turner. The period of childhood when the world seemed to him as unsubstantial.

Thrice—Most warmly (three and the multiples of three are mystic numbers).

Even yet—When I am a grown-up man, and have lost the credulity of a child.

A voice—Not a visible bird.

Mystery—Something that cannot be explained.

Rove—Wander.

Beget—Recall to memory.

Golden time—The period of happy childhood when man is not tortured by cares and anxieties of this world.

The earth we pace—This material, every-day world of ours.

An unsubstantial fairy place—The dwelling place of fairies or bodiless spirits.

EXERCISES

1. What is an Ode? Can this poem be called an Ode?
2. What is the influence of the song of the cuckoo on the poet's mind? What does this song remind him of?
3. Give the substance of the poem.
4. Explain the fourth and the eighth stanzas of the poem.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

The poem describes the poet's memory of the bygone days with the help of four similes, comparing old recollections with (a) the light of the sun falling on the sails of a ship taking away or bringing back some dear old friend; (b) the song of a bird poured into the ears of a dying man; (c) the memory of kisses after the death or estrangement of the beloved; (d) the freshness and intensity of first love. Professor Wallace says, "the yearnings of the human heart for some ideal that is known to exist but cannot be defined, and the consciousness of the hopeless character of the desire so far as this world is concerned, are commonly regarded as evidence of the divine origin and immortality of the soul."

Idle—Vain, useless in so far as they cannot bring back the past.

From the depth of some divine despair—caused by a feeling of utter despair. Despair is said to be 'divine', because it gives us a sense of futility of human efforts and shows our dependence on the will of God.

Happy autumn field—The fields smiling with ripe harvest in the autumn season. The autumn in England is the harvesting season. When the standing crops are ready to be reaped.

Up from the nether world—Coming home from a foreign country beyond the sea. 'Nether' means lower. Owing to the curvature of the earth's surface, the ships coming from some distant parts of the world are spoken of as coming from a lower region.

Reddens—Shines.

Verge—Horizon.

Dark summer dawns—To the eyes of a dying man there is no brightness in the summer dawns which usually are bright.

Earliest pipe—First song.

Half awakened birds—Birds which are still in their roost.

Casement—Window.

Grows a glimmering square—Becomes more and more faint till it looks like a mere shape.

Hopeless fancy—Imagination affected by despair due to not winning the love of the beloved.

Feigned—Supposed.

Lips that are for others—The lips of the beloved who has transferred her love to another person.

Death in life—Being as painful as death, though physically still alive.

EXERCISES

1. Reproduce in your own words the imagery employed by the poet.
2. What revives the poet's memory of the past days? How does the poet express it?
3. Give the substance of this poem.
4. Explain the third stanza of the poem.

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

Encircling gloom—Darkness on all sides.

Garish—Obtrusively bright.

Spite—Ill-will, Malice.

Moor—Open waste ground.

Fen—Low marshy track of land.

Crag—Rugged rock.

Torrent—Rushing stream of water.

EXERCISES

1. Give in your own words the summary of this poem.
2. Scan the last stanza of the poem.
3. Explain the second stanza of the poem.

ALL FOR THE CAUSE I

Cause—A lofty motive for action.

Tidings—Good news regarding the measure of success already achieved.

Tyrants—The cruel enemies of the cause.

Voice—As a result of their sacrifice others are emboldened to plead for such a cause fearlessly.

Vision—Hope for the realization of the ideal in future.

Crown—Indicative of the success and triumph of the cause.

Meseemeth—It seems to me. (Archaic expression)

Overthrow the curse—Morris as a socialist realized fully well that the present capitalistic society can be changed into a communistic one only after a steady fight.

Fools and dreamers—evolutionaries dedicated to a new cause are, in the initial stages, always dubbed as such by the reactionaries and diehards.

Brave and wise—When these revolutionaries are found succeeding, the ideas of people change and they are looked upon as 'heroes of the day'.

New-built—Reconstituted as a result of the innumerable sacrifices made by these heroes.

EXERCISES

1. What is the message the poet seeks to convey through this poem?
2. What is the *Cause*? Which do you consider to be the cause for you?
3. Explain lines 19-22 and lines 27-31.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

Captain—Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States of America. On New Year's Day in 1863, he proclaimed the emancipation of the negroes, which led to a Civil War. This War came to a successful end in 1865 and within a week Lincoln was shot dead in a theatre by a Virginian.

Fearful trip—Perilous voyage, the difficult task of building the country during the Civil War.

Rack—Storm-clouds.

The prize—The abolition of slavery in 1863.

The port is near—Since the war is over, peace and prosperity for the country are ensured.

Keel—(Synecdoche) The ship.

Bleeding drops of red—Blood oozing out of the bullet-wound in the body stretched out on the floor.

Some dream—The death of Lincoln, in the hour of his triumph, is such a rude shock that it cannot be easily believed.

Ship is anchored—The Civil War is over and the state has regained peace and tranquillity.

Voyage closed—The freedom of the negroes is an accomplished fact now.

EXERCISES

1. What was the occasion for the composition of this poem?

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2. What is the achievement of Lincoln as a great statesman?
3. How did Lincoln meet his death? Can you think of any other instance in modern times?
4. Explain the last stanza of the poem.

A PASSER-BY

Quest—Search.

Vales—Valleys.

Haven—Harbour, Place of shelter.

Odorous air—Fragrant breeze.

Reef—Ridge of rock just above or below the surface of sea water.

Snow-capped—Covered with snow.

Divine—Understand the nature of.

Aslant—Slantingly across.

Tackle—Mechanism of ropes.

Prow's line—Fore-part immediately about stem of boat.

Offing—Part of visible sea distant from shore.

Foam—Froth. Collection of small bubbles formed in liquid by agitation.

EXERCISES

1. Give in your own words the substance of this poem.
2. What is the most striking feature of the ship according to the poet?
3. Explain and scan lines 17—20.

THE CHARCOAL BURNER

Dell—Small valley with tree-clad sides.

Grizzled—Grey-haired.

Emblem—Sign, Mark.

Animates—Inspires. *मिलान*

Humdrum—Common place, Dull.

Naught—Nothing.

Strain—Tone, Pitch.

Blithe—Happy, Cheerful.

Unecstatic—Unexalted state of feeling.

Ravishment—Enrapture.

Trudge—Laborious walk.

Introspection—Examination of one's own thought.

EXERCISES

1. Sketch the character of the Charcoal Burner.
2. What is the moral that you draw from the life of the Charcoal Burner?
3. Explain the last two stanzas of the poem.

SWEET STAY-AT-HOME

Strange Continents—Foreign countries.

Rich grape grow for miles—The reference is to Spain and the lower part of France famous for their vineyards.

Summer's night—The reference is to the Arctic regions where there is a continuous day of six months.

In solid cages of white ice—The reference is to reflection of sunlight on floating ice in the North Sea. The icebergs are compared to white cages, and the multicoloured light to birds within them.

Black fingers pick white cotton—In the southern States of America, the negro slaves work in the cotton-fields.

Black throats in harmony—These negroes as they work in the fields sing songs which have become popular throughout the world.

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Stones that lie flat on the earth—The reference is to the ruins of Babylon or Egypt.

Nature—Bring up.

EXERCISES

1. What are the various sights which Sweet Stay-at-Home would have seen if she had gone abroad?
2. Give in your own words the summary of this poem.
3. Explain the last five lines of the poem.

THE WEST WIND

Fluting—Singing melodiously.

Song to a man's soul—Has an inspiring and uplifting influence.

Fire to a man's brain—Provides an incentive to thinking.

Balm for bruised heart—Consolation and healing power for the afflicted and the wounded.

Sleep for aching eyes—Rest for the tired and the worried.

EXERCISES

1. What does the West Wind remind the poet of?
2. Give a vivid description of the West Land as depicted by the poet.
3. Explain and scan the fifth stanza of the poem.

THE FLUTE-PLAYER OF BRINDABAN

Matchless flute—'Krishna, the Divine Flute-Player of Brindaban who plays the tune of the Infinite that lures every Hindu heart from mortal cares and attachments.'

Kadamba—'A large tree with spreading branches and orange-coloured, fragrant blossoms. It bears a fruit about the size of a small orange.' (Turnbull)

Intbral—In bondage.

Indra—The god of rains.

Yama—The god of death.

Nectar—Drink of the gods.

EXERCISES

1. Give the substance of this poem.
2. Explain the last stanza of the poem.

RUBAIYAT OF UMAR KHAYYAM OF NAISHAPUR

Cock crew—The crowing of the cock is indicative of the approaching dawn.

Tavern—Drinking house, 'Caravanserai'. It refers to the world.

Thou—The Saki—the beloved.

Enow—Enough.

Mortal Sovranty—This earthly life is supreme and is quite free from any other control.

Cash—(Metaphor). The pleasures of this world.

Waive—Set aside.

Drum—Death's drum.

Hour or two—Short span of life.

Jamshyd—An early legendary king of Persia renowned for his cup, called, 'Jam-i-Jamshyd', which was filled with the elixir of life.

Babram—A king of Persia known for his love of hunting the wild ass, and thus winning for himself the title of 'Gor'.

Cup—(Metonymy) of Wine.

Past regrets—Disappointments and sins of the past.

Future fears—Fear of hell as a result of a sinful life.

Seven thousand years—"According to Dr. Nicholson the 7,000 years are counted from the birth of Adam."

Dust descent—Die and be buried.

Sans—Without (French word).

Chequer—Alternately coloured squares.

Closet—A small wooden box in which the pieces are kept.

Moving finger—Fate. It refers to the belief that at the birth of a child, the invisible finger of Fate writes on his forehead what he has in store for him.

EXERCISES

1. What is Umar's philosophy of life as found in these quatrains?
2. Explain stanzas, 3, 9, 11, and 12.

'JANA-GANA-MANA'

Rouses—Inspires.

Mingles—Mixes with.

Music—Rhythmical flow of water.

Chanted—Uttered musically.

Offerings—Gifts.

Tribulations—Trials and sufferings.

Stupor—Torpidity. Helpless amazement.

EXERCISES

1. How do you like this song as the National Anthem of India? Would you prefer it to Bande Mataram?
2. Give in your own words the substance of this poem.
3. Explain lines 6—8.

'O MAN DIVINE, SANCTIFY OUR EFFORTS'

Sanctify—Consecrate, Purify.

Image—Shape.

Transgression—Infringement of commandment.

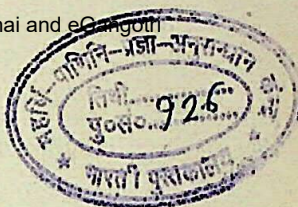
Serene—Calm and Unperturbed.

Fortitude—Courage in adversity.

Pride of self—Arrogance, Vanity.

EXERCISES

1. What is the prayer of the poet in this poem?
2. Explain the second stanza of the poem.



जन-गण-मन

कोरस ताल धुमाली

(१)

जन-गण-मन-अधिनायक जय हे भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 पंजाब सिंध गुजरात मराठा, द्राविड़ उत्कल बंगा ।
 विन्ध्य हिमालय यमुना गंगा, उच्छल-जलधि तरंगा ।
 तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशिष माँगे ।
 गाहे तव जय-गाथा ।

जन-गण-मंगलदायक जय हे, भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 जय हे ! जय हे ! जय हे ! जय जय जय जय हे !

(२)

अहरह तव आह्वान प्रचारित, सुनि तव उदार वाणी ।
 हिन्दु बौद्ध सिख जैन पारसिक मुसलमान क्रिस्तानी ।
 पूरव पश्चिम आसे, तव सिंहासन पासे ।
 प्रेमहार होय गाथा ।

जन-गण-ऐक्य-विधायक जय हे, भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 जय हे ! जय हे ! जय हे ! जय जय जय जय हे !

(३)

पतन-अम्युदय-बंधुर पंथा युग-युग-धावित यात्री ।
 हे चिर-सारथि ! तव रथ चक्रे मुखरित पथ दिन-रात्री !
 दारुण विप्लव माझे, तव शंखध्वनि वाजे ।

संकट-दुखत्राता

जन-गण-पथ-परिचायक जय हे, भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 जय हे ! जय हे ! जय हे ! जय जय जय जय हे !

(४)

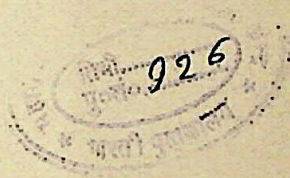
घोर तिमिरघन निविड़ निशीथे पीड़ित मूर्च्छित देशे ।
 जाग्रत छिल तव अविचल मंगल नत-नयने अनिमेषे ।
 दुःस्वप्ने आतंके, रक्षा करिले अंके ।
 स्नेहमयी तुमि माता ।

जन-गण-दुःख-त्रायक जय हे भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 जय हे ! जय हे ! जय हे ! जय जय जय जय हे !

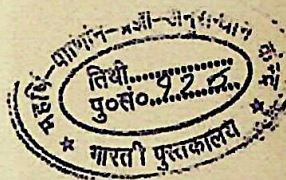
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रात्रि प्रभातिल उदिल रविच्छवि पूर्वं उदयगिरि-भाले ।
 गाहे दिहंगम, पुण्य समीरण नव जीवन रस ढाले ।
 तव करुणारुण रागे, निद्रित भारत जागे ।
 तव चरणे नत माथा ।

जय जय जय हे जय राजश्वर भारत-भाग्यविधाता ।
 जय हे ! जय हे ! जय हे ! जय जय जय जय हे !







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